





AN IMPORTANT PROBLEM.

According to the London, *Morning*, American agricultural competition is a subject of deep concern all over the United Kingdom. Not only wheat growers but millers are excited, since importations of American flour are ruining the market for the English and Scotch mills. At Glasgow, where the millers are very numerous, the subject is attracting great attention, and even causing alarm. It is reported also that correspondence from all parts of the Kingdom points to the conclusion that American manufacturers of flour, although only in its infancy, threaten to stop the millers in a paying industry. The most formidable competition is that of the mills at Minneapolis, Minn. These are the great milling establishments of the United States. They have been in America as yet sent comparatively little flour abroad. But at Minneapolis the business has reached enormous proportions. One firm alone exports three hundred thousand barrels of flour a day, and it was recently announced that another miller would soon be constructed whose product would be not less than 250,000 barrels a day. This would give a total of 550,000 barrels a day as the output of a single mill. Such a mill would require 12,000,000 bushels of wheat a year to supply it, and the annual value of its product would exceed \$15,000,000.

London journals of milling industry, show reference to the fact that the millers of the United Kingdom are alarmed at the prospect of American competition. But there seems to be no good reason for this apprehension. Cheap transportation from the upper Mississippi valley, through the strength of river and rail competition, creates this question. The parliamentary commissioners sent to America last year to investigate the probabilities of American competition were misled by superficial observation. They made only a flying trip and refused to believe what Americans told them of the resources and capabilities of the country. So they went home and reported that the American wheat-growers would be so far exhausted that it would become necessary to use expensive fertilizers and to expend more labor in cultivation, and in that happy day the British farmer would no longer have reason to fear American competition. These new sensations to allay the fears of those who were interested in upholding the British system of land tenure, and to arrest the emigration of English farmers. They seemed to have come here for a purpose, and to have been blind to everything that did not square with that purpose. The truth is that the great American wheat region is as yet hardly touched, and we shall not reach the limit of our producing capacity for generations to come.

But it does not follow that English agriculture will be ruined by American competition. It will be necessary for English farmers to grow crops for production of which they have a comparative advantage. Some crops which cannot be raised by any other country, the use of transportation that is likely to occur. It was pointed out recently by Mr. Edward Atkinson, one of our noted writers on economic subjects, that though our share of the Hudson river can no longer grow wheat in competition with the west, yet the value of farm lands in this state is now actually greater than before wheat was introduced. Some lands have indeed become valuable, but the loss of others has been more than made up by the advance in lands near the manufacturing centers, upon which are grown seasonable products for towns and city markets. A similar change is said to be going on in English agriculture, and the competition of cheap American grain is likely to force it into more and more profitable lines.

We have here on the Pacific slope a grain-growing region of enormous extent and unequalled fertility, but we cannot counsel ourselves the fact that we are in an unfavorable position in respect of the trans-shipment of our grain. The great wheat-producing region of the upper Mississippi and upper Missouri are recently gained advantages in transportation—both in time and cost—which we cannot share. This is depressing to agricultural industry, and therefore to general prosperity here. To overcome this disadvantage, or at least to reduce it, is a problem which the vast wheat-growing region west of the Rocky mountains must face and solve. To open and develop a market beyond the Pacific would seem to be the most ready and hopeful resource. The market, however, will take time. Still, it is likely to come with the progress of international intercourse and the introduction of American and European industries among the populations of Eastern Asia. At present the European market, except a marginal share of wheat, is in our own states beyond the Rocky mountains is practically out of our reach. That is, we cannot reach it so as to give our producers a profit comparable with that gained by the producers who have the advantage which the great competing systems of trans-shipment from St. Paul and Chicago afford.

As most persons are aware, Professor Forster, the eminent astronomer, is a scientist who rarely jumps to conclusions. Not are there any who more readily submit to correction than he, when a theory adopted by him as plausible has been proven by further observation to be erroneous. Of all this we have fresh proof in a letter which he has recently published, showing that he has abandoned the notion that sun spots have any influence on terrestrial climate, health or crops. He says that the scientific changes of our mundane sphere—the cold snaps, brutal tempests, volcanic, floods, pestilences, famines, plentiful seasons and heavy harvests are all governed and arranged so power not visible to the eye, even with the aid of the telescope, in the whole universe. This explanation is the result of the discovery that the recent and rare conjunctions of the four largest planets have no influence upon earthly movements, as was supposed a year or two ago. These stars will proceed in their courses as usual, and there is no known reason why the world should be heated by any of the celestial phenomena now seen for the first time plainly, but, perhaps, of frequent occurrence in the past history of the world, even as known to mankind. These declarations of the foremost astronomer of the period gather additional importance when they prove the failure of a theory of antiquated kind, but still treated by thousands of ignorant people, who give their money freely to the humbuggers who persuade them that stars influence their fortunes, fashions and prospects. Professor Forster says that his investigations all prove that the charlatans who pretend to read the stars "know really nothing about them, and use mathematical and astronomical calculations from the *Naturalist* to give color of scientific knowledge to their ridiculous speculations. It is not true that all these predictions from stars, comets, solar phenomena and the like, had gone the way of the "Morgue Ship" impostures in popular estimation.

Mr. Thompson French, who has recently "died" from the position of auditor of railroad accounts because of a remarkable attachment to the interests of the Central Pacific, has saved enough out of his disloyalty to enable him to establish himself in an elegant country seat at Virginia, New Jersey. He is making extensive preparations for a European tour, and our readers will be well to represent the interests of his favorite railroads before he crosses the Atlantic. The belief is currently held, however, that Mr. French will not be a short time to be put on his feet, and that he will be able to continue his work for the Northern Pacific and other companies.

NEW TO-DAY

NEW MARKET THEATER

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, July 12 and 13.

TWO GRAND CONCERTS

BY THE

ONCE SSOM JIMBO JO

OF HONOLULU.

And the distinguished French artist.

MISS MARIE NELLINI.

Members of the Honolulu Quartet: Chas. Schmitzer, First Violin.

FRANK THURLE, Second Violin.

THOMAS EVAN, Tenor and Clarinet.

WILLIAM NICKLICK, Saxophone and Flute.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN, Bass.

Solo Violoncello to the King of Holland.

This renowned artist, whose record of thirty years of successful triumphs is known to those of State through-out the land, is the most perfect example of the character of the artist in the field of musical art.

He will give a concert of vocal and instrumental music, and will be accompanied by the quartet.

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1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 278: 1039-1044.

**F. L. DREW.**  
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